

Pam  
N. Amer

1926

# HOME MISSION LESSON,

ISSUED BY THE  
WOMEN'S BAPTIST HOME MISSION SOCIETY.

PREPARED BY

MARY G. BURDETTE, Corresponding Secretary, 2411 Indiana Ave., Chicago, Ill.

## LESSON VIII.—THE CHINESE IN AMERICA.

1. By what were the Chinese first attracted to America, and when and where did the first immigrants land?

Gold was the powerful magnet that drew the Chinese from their ancient seclusion, and led them to our Western land. The discovery of this precious metal in the mountains and sands of California in 1848 brought 300 Chinese to that State in 1849. In 1850 came 450, and in 1851, 2,700. The foreign shipping merchants in China took up the matter, and by glowing accounts of the wealth of the "Golden Hills," induced a much larger immigration, amounting in 1852 to more than 18,000. This immigration went on, spreading up and down the coast of America, until checked by the restrictive legislation of Congress in 1882.

2. How was Chinese immigration at first regarded?

Chinese immigration was at first thought to be very desirable. Thirty-five years ago Chinamen were welcomed by governors and mayors. They then helped to solve the problem of improved farms and ranches, of mills and water-courses, of mining and railroad building in the mountains and over the plains. Their readiness in learning the trades made their cheap labor available, and whether right or wrong, that cheap labor was sought in not a few of the industries of the people, and the Chinese were encouraged to come.

3. How many are there at present in this country, and what continues to attract them?

According to the census of 1900 there are 110,050 Chinese now in America. The same powerful motive which drew them at first holds them still, namely, gold and silver; not now dug so much from the hills as gained in the operations of trade and by patient, faithful labor.

4. Why are Chinese in this country nearly all from Canton Province?

Canton was the first port open to foreigners. The Cantonese are naturally more enterprising and less conservative than those in other parts of China. This port once open, soon became a door of egress as well as ingress.

5. What are some of their leading characteristics?

Of the general character of the Chinese it is not easy to form a fair and impartial judgment. Those who have resided long among them and who are supposed to know them well, have reached very different conclusions. But it seems safe to say that the Chinese as a race are peaceable, sober, industrious, and practical; also that they are patient, persistent, affectionate, grateful, and generous.

That the Chinese are strongly imbued with a mercantile spirit is seen in the fact than in San Francisco and New York there are Chinese merchants successfully managing large business enterprises, and Chinese manufacturers, employing in some cases hundreds of workmen.

Said Dr. Simmons of New York City: "A more sociable, communicative people does not exist. What one of them learns he is sure to communicate to his neighbors. Thus the Gospel will spread."

"See how peaceful they are, how patient under injuries; often hooted at, often insulted, often pelted with mud and stones, yet seldom retaliating.

"See again how benevolent they are. The Chinamen and my Bible school heard that we were raising funds for some object. They said, 'What is it for? Let us give, too.' We answered, 'No, we do not ask money of you to support our poor!' But as soon as they found it was for the Baptist Home for the Aged, they went outside, and on the spot made up a purse of twenty-five dollars, and came in and gave it to the treasurer.

Another characteristic which is a great obstacle in the way of gospel work among the Chinese in America is their race pride. They claim to have had a national existence extending over 4,000 years. In the time of Confucius (500 B. C.) they had a written literature and had made considerable progress in the arts of civilized life. "Yes," they say, "Jesus Christ was a good man, but so also was Confucius. He wrote many good books, and the Chinese code of morals formulated by him must be good to keep together such a vast body of people as is the Chinese nation. Jesus Christ is the white man's God; it is better for Chinese to worship their own gods."

6. What can you say of the religion of the Chinese and how is it observed in this country?

The Chinese, remarkable in so many ways, exhibit in the matter of religion their usual eccentricity. Three forms of belief, the Confucian, the Buddhist, and the Taoquist, may be considered the national religions.

Confucianism is the belief of the educated classes, but it is less a religion than a philosophy. It does not treat of spiritual things, and hence room is left for other creeds to supply its deficiencies in this respect. It forms the basis of the social life and political system of the Chinese. The questions to which Confucius replies are: How shall I do my duty to my neighbor? How can I best discharge the duties of a



virtuous citizen? Funeral temples are erected to him, and although his image is not used as an idol, his tablet is worshipped, and sacrifices of oxen and sheep are offered to it at the vernal and autumnal equinoxes.

The temples of Buddha are crowded with images, and the god is represented as expounding his doctrine to attentive listeners. But Buddhism is held in contempt by the learned and philosophic Chinamen, and is fast losing its hold on the masses.

Taoism has not more hold than Buddhism on the educated classes of Chinese. Its priests are generally ignorant men, few of them teaching or understanding the real principles of their faith. They prepare spells and incantations, and profess to cure the sick by exorcising the evil spirits which afflict the patient. They affect, also, like modern spiritualists, to hold intercourse with the dead.

The worship of ancestors is a remarkable and prominent feature in the social life of the Chinese, and is dictated by that principle of filial piety which forms the basis of Chinese society. All Chinese worship, from time to time, at the tombs of their parents. The well-known desire of every Chinaman to lay his bones in his own country is based on the belief that the welfare of the departed spirit depends on certain offerings made at the tomb by relatives.

The Chinese who come to America are usually from the lower and comparatively uneducated classes, and bring with them the religious notions received and practiced in their own lands. Even under the shadow of Christian churches they have erected heathen temples, whose doors stand always open, and whither worshipers resort at all hours.

7. What do you consider the duty of Christians toward Chinese in our land?

We answer the question in the language of Scripture. "*And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself.*" This love will prompt every Christian to give to these strangers that Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

8. How has this duty been recognized by Christians of various denominations?

The first mission among the Chinese on the Pacific Coast was established by the Presbyterians in 1852. They stationed in San Francisco Rev. William Speer, D.D., who began his work among the sick. He opened a dispensary, and at the same time began the regular preaching of the Gospel. As a result the first Chinese church in the New World was organized November 6, 1853. The Baptists were the next on the field, with Rev. J. L. Shuck as their representative, who opened a chapel for the Chinese in 1854. The Episcopalians followed closely in 1855, and the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1868 opened in San

Francisco a mission under the superintendence of Rev. O. Gibson, D.D., which had a continuous and successful history. In 1878 the field was entered by the United Presbyterians. The Congregationalists, also, have been carrying on work for the Chinese in California for a number of years. While there have been changes and some interruptions in the work thus begun, none, so far as we are informed, has been entirely abandoned.

9. Has the result of our labor thus far been such as to encourage further effort?

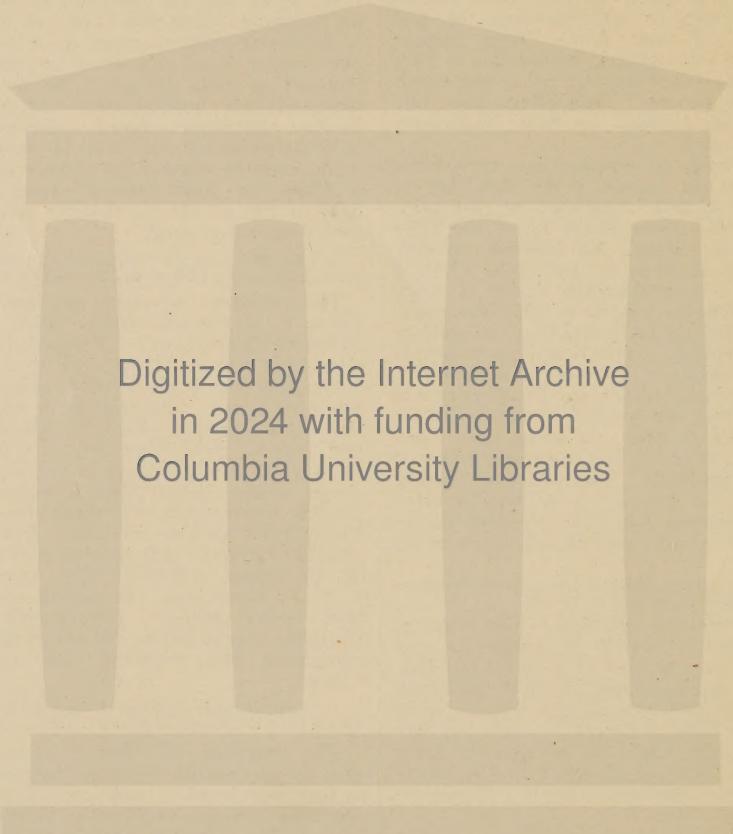
So far as we have been able to ascertain the opinion of those who have been engaged in missionary labors among the Chinese in our country, it is in favor of "patient continuance in well doing." The names of thousands are written upon the rolls of Sunday and night schools. The converts to Christianity are numbered by many hundreds, some of whom have already returned to China as "light-bearers," carrying the light of life to various heathen villages in their own native land.

10. Do the converted Chinese who return to their own country prove efficient in Christian work?

The testimony of many missionaries to China is in the affirmative. Rev. H. V. Noyes of Canton says: "Perhaps the most interesting feature of the work in America is the help that it gives to our missions in Southern China. Eighteen years ago there was not a Christian chapel or school in all that region. Now there are few places in these districts where there is not a mission chapel within fifteen miles, a distance the Chinese easily walk. Of these chapels the Presbyterian mission has six. Every one of these locations was secured by the help of Christians returned from California. \* \* \* These men are among our very best native helpers, commencing their Christian course in the United States, and continuing their studies and work in China."

11. How does the condition of the women and girls among the Chinese appeal to their Christian sisters?

The condition of Chinese women and girls is not usually better in America than in their own heathen land. Indeed, we have read the "Status of Chinese Women" in Miss Field's "Pagoda Shadows," and comparing it with what is told us of their status on the Pacific coast, we blush to confess that they seem in some important respects better cared for there than here. According to the Chinese custom, a man may marry two or more wives. The first one, however, or the true wife is the favorite one; the others are called secondary wives, and perform the servile labor of the home. Very few of the first wives are brought to this country. Among the nearly two thousand Chinese families on the Pacific coast, may be found some of these, but the far larger number are secondary wives, whom these Chinamen have either brought with them or secured for



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2024 with funding from  
Columbia University Libraries

[https://archive.org/details/homemissionlesso00burd\\_2](https://archive.org/details/homemissionlesso00burd_2)

their use in this country. According to their Chinese custom, these women may be considered lawful wives. The large majority of the Chinese women in this country, however, are simply and openly prostitutes. Quite a brisk trade has been carried on in the sale of young girls who have been brought to this country for that purpose. They are sold for servants, but are in reality slaves, and are often treated with all the harshness and cruelty that an ignorant and degraded people can show toward those over whom they have absolute control. Many of those called wives are simply slaves, bought and sold at the caprice of the men.

It is very difficult to secure the attendance of girls or women either at the schools or chapel services. The only way to reach them is by going to the places where they live, and this can be done only by women.

#### A BRIEF SKETCH OF BAPTIST WORK.

No sooner were the Chinese on our shores than the subject of their evangelization began to occupy the attention of our Baptist Mission Boards, both North and South. As early as 1852, the Secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society was in correspondence with Dr. Dean, with reference to securing a native Chinese missionary for service in California, and in 1854 the Board of the Southern Baptist Convention sent Rev. J. L. Shuck to Sacramento to labor among the Chinese. So successful was this effort that in 1890 Mr. Shuck organized a church of nineteen Chinese, whom he had baptized on a profession of their faith.

In 1868 Rev. Jesse B. Thomas, then of San Francisco, wrote: "One of our sisters begins a Chinese class in our school next Sabbath." In 1870 Rev. John Francis, assisted by Tung Seung Nam, began his work in San Francisco under appointment of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and the headquarters of the mission were established in the basement of the First Baptist Church. The denomination was urged to purchase the property of this church, as especially suitable for carrying forward Chinese mission work. For various reasons the purchase was not made.

In 1874 Mr. Francis wrote: "There is no mission of any denomination on this coast so prosperous as ours. There are three native preachers, who every Sabbath preach to thousands of their countrymen in their native tongue." He reported at the same time 125 Chinese in attendance upon daily instruction, and Sabbath schools in San Francisco and Oakland in which 275 Chinese were taught, chiefly in the Scriptures. This same year the work of the society was somewhat deranged by changes in the secretaryship of the society at New York, by the death of Mr. Taylor and the resignation of Mr. Francis.

In 1875 Rev. E. Z. Simmons, a returned missionary from China, entered upon the work relinquished by Mr. Francis, and an

appeal was again made to the denomination to purchase the property of the First Baptist Church at an expense of \$40,000. In 1876 the Board of the A. B. H. M. Society decided that the responsibility of establishing and sustaining Chinese mission schools on the Pacific coast should be left with the English-speaking churches in the places where such schools were needed, and made this suggestion to the churches in California, at the same time pledging the society to make as liberal appropriations as the condition of the treasury would allow. As to the purchase of the property, it was stated that the present demands upon the treasury and the urgency of the claims in other places were so great that it was not thought judicious at that time to assume the responsibility of so expensive an undertaking.

In California, during the two years following, the Board co-operated with the Metropolitan Baptist Church in San Francisco in mission work for the Chinese, and in Oregon with the First Baptist Church in Portland, where, through the agency of Rev. E. Z. Simmons and Dong Gong, a Chinese convert of the San Francisco Mission, a mission was established November 11, 1874.

The growing opposition of many Californians to the Chinese in 1877 seriously interfered with the mission in San Francisco, and in 1878 caused its suspension. In 1879 work was resumed in co-operation with the First Baptist Church in Oakland.

Eighteen hundred and eighty was a year memorable for the culmination of the anti-Chinese agitation on the Pacific coast, in which certain of the denomination bore an unenviable part, but it also chronicled the arrival in San Francisco of Rev. J. B. Hartwell, who then represented the Southern Baptists. In 1884 this Chinese mission was transferred to the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and Dr. Hartwell continued his labors under its auspices as superintendent of Baptist Chinese missions on the Pacific coast until October, 1893, when he left for China, and in November Mr. H. Foster Norris became his successor. His tenure of office was terminated by his death. For some years following there was no general superintendent, but in October, 1903, Rev. George Campbell was appointed to fill the position. August 19, 1888, witnessed in San Francisco the dedication of a Baptist Chinese mission building. Preaching is done both on the streets and in the church week nights and on Sunday; Bible classes are also held, and day school, night school, and Sunday school work is maintained regularly. The A. B. H. M. Society reports, in 1903, seven missionaries among the Chinese. It assists, also, in sustaining seven day schools, mainly in the states of California, Oregon, Washington, and Montana. In three of these teachers are supported by the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society of Boston.



## WOMEN'S WORK.

In 1884 Mrs. Janie L. Sanford, who had been laboring in San Francisco under the auspices of the Southern Baptist Convention, was commissioned by the Board of the Women's Baptist Home Mission Society. She had acquired in China a facile use of the Canton dialect; she visited in homes and conducted a day school for Chinese boys and girls.

In 1885 Miss Electa J. Booth, a graduate of the Baptist Missionary Training School, was appointed to assist Mrs. Sanford. Subsequently the latter accepted an appointment by the Southern Board to Canton, China, and at the urgent request of Miss Booth, seconded and indorsed by Dr. Hartwell, Mrs. Tong Kit Hing, wife of the Chinese pastor of the Chinese Baptist Church, San Francisco, was appointed to aid Miss Booth, especially in visiting the women in their homes, while Tong Kit Hing, the Chinese pastor, was engaged to assist in the day school.

Miss Booth's marriage and removal to China during the fall of 1888 deprived the mission of her services, and Miss Claudia J. White took charge of the work until April, 1889, when Miss Martha J. Ames arrived on the field, and Miss White left for a season of rest and a year in the Baptist Missionary Training School, returning in October, 1890; she left the United States October 26, 1891, for work in Canton, China. Miss Anna B. Hartwell became Miss White's successor in San Francisco, October 26, 1891, and followed her to China in October, 1892; Miss Florence Ford was appointed to fill the vacancy. In October, 1895, a kindergarten department was opened in connection with our school in San Francisco, and Miss Irene Johnson installed as teacher for the first year, when Miss Ford took personal charge of it. Miss Ames was detailed for special service from October, 1895, till June, 1896, and Miss Abbie E. Ross employed as substitute.

Miss Ross remained after Miss Ames' return, assisting for a time in both departments of the school, but after a while relieved Miss Ford almost entirely of the care of the kindergarten. In March, 1898, Mrs. Tong was employed to assist in the kindergarten, teaching in Chinese. As a result a number of older girls came into this department, pleased to be taught by a Chinese woman, so that now about two-thirds of the pupils are girls, a fact calling for profound gratitude. These older girls add a distinct department to the school. Miss Ford's health being seriously impaired, in May, 1898, she was brought East for change and rest, with such special service as her strength would permit. November 1, 1898, with the approval of the Board of the Women's Society, Miss Ames accepted the appointment of the American Baptist Home Mission Society as superintendent of Chinese missions in San Francisco, and Miss

Ida May Egli was employed to assist in the school work. Miss Ford being unable to return to the work, Miss Helen S. Webber was appointed to join our band of workers in San Francisco in October, 1899.

In August, 1900, Rev. Tong Kit Hing and family returned to China and Rev. Lee Tsai Leong became pastor of the Chinese church. He and his wife at once took up the work in the schools, teaching Chinese.

Miss Egli finding her health somewhat impaired left the field in September, 1900, and Miss Webber took charge of the kindergarten. As the attendance increased another teacher was needed and Miss Jennie Egli was appointed. Miss Ida Egli resumed her work in August, 1902, Miss Webber now leaving the field for a time.

In December, 1901, Miss Claudia J. White, while recuperating from her work in China, was appointed to do some special work among the women and older girls in San Francisco. Her term of service terminated December, 1902.

Miss Mina Morford began work among the Chinese in Los Angeles November, 1900, the Women's Baptist Home Mission Society co-operating with the First Baptist Church of that city in her support.

Miss Alice Voss became actively interested in the Chinese in Portland in 1894, and in 1895 had succeeded in winning the confidence and love of a number. The pressure of other duties left her comparatively little time for this work, and her appeal for a helper resulted in the appointment of Miss Alice Johnson, who remained only from October 13, 1895, until May, 1896, when the work, including a school opened in March, 1896, was committed to Miss Voss, she being released from other responsibilities that she might attend to it. She had some assistance from Rev. Fong Chak and wife, but in September, 1901, they returned to China. In March, 1902, on account of a serious nervous break down in her health, Miss Voss was compelled to leave the field for recuperation. At the present writing, February, 1904, while much better she is still unable to return to her work, and Miss Clara Clark is temporarily employed by the society to work among Chinese women and children in Portland.

In January, 1904, Miss Mollie McMinn began work in Seattle, Washington.

Mrs. Fung Mow was appointed for work among the Chinese in New York City, June 15, 1903.

In the three years Miss Frances Bliss (now Mrs. Beaman) was in Helena, Montana, previous to her departure for China, she did very successful work among the Chinese; at least seven men were converted and baptized as a result of this service.

In January, 1904, the Women's Baptist Home Mission Society is supporting six missionaries among the Chinese, and aiding in the support of three others.

